

Next step a 'travel and tourism minister'

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THE tourism sector is pleased with the recent appointment of **Marthinus van Schalkwyk** as standalone tourism minister.

Formerly minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Marthinus will be supported by **Thozile Xasa**, who has been named as deputy minister of Tourism.

SA Tourism chairman, **Jabu Mabuza**, says the appointment of a stand-alone minister is recognition of the industry's importance to the economy.

"With the focus and recognition of the need for a dedicated tourism ministry, we hope that additional resources will be invested in tourism because so much rides on this industry that has delivered, and will continue to deliver,

significantly to our economy."

Satsa ceo, **Michael Tatalias**, says Marthinus has shown himself to be a proven competent minister. "The tourism sector is happy. We as an industry know him and like him, and he has done a lot in areas such as transport. We are also very pleased that

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"We look forward to building a strong relationship with the minister and to establish travel as a separate industry so that at the next general election we might see the appointment of a travel and tourism minister as the two sectors play very different roles," said **Robyn Christie**, ceo of Asata on the appointment.

Several industry pundits say the move to introduce a tourism ministry is a positive step for the sector. The initial fears that the importance of the environment to tourism would be lost with the split between Environmental Affairs and Tourism seem to have been allayed by retaining Marthinus, known for his focus on environmental issues during his tenure. ■